

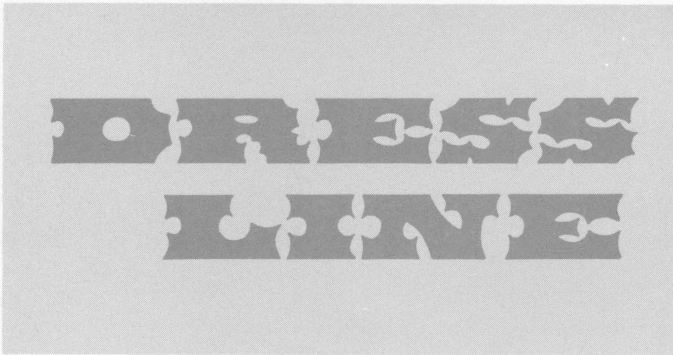
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9/65—10M

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Every woman has at least one personal designer—herself. Are you doing the best you can for you? Do you select dress lines which do the most for your face and figure? Lines in garments and accessories can do much to flatter YOU.

Very few women have ideal figures; however, skilful use of dress lines can flatter many figures. The placement and direction of lines can change your apparent size and shape. When line is skilfully used, a tall figure can appear shorter, a short figure taller, a thin figure larger, and a stout figure smaller.

Line can improve your figure proportions too. Narrow hips and narrow shoulders can be made to appear wider. Wide hips may be made to seem more in proportion to the rest of your figure by the use of line.

Line is not the only art element which may help you to lead others to think that your face and figure are different from what they actually are. Color, texture, and space help to do this. All are closely related. A bright color may make one part of the figure appear larger than it is. A dull or dark color could make another part seem smaller. A bulky texture usually makes a person appear larger than does a smooth texture. The width and placement of lines, whether surface or structural; the type of silhouette line such as bell or slim; and the space between lines, as in a six-gored dress or skirt, affect apparent size and shape.

Thus, a bulky sweater (texture) or a light yellow (color) worn with a dark brown sheath (line) skirt could make a narrow-shouldered person seem to have an improved figure.

This bulletin is primarily concerned with the use of line to improve the apparent proportions of face and figure. However, we recognize that color or texture could overpower the effect of line. The nature of line is further explained in Extension Bulletin 457, **Design—Line, Form, and Space**.

Know Yourself

Choosing dress lines which flatter your face and figure takes time and thought. Analyzing your present garments to see which are most becoming and why is a good place to begin. Stand in front of a full length mirror—a triple one would be even better—and try to see yourself as others see you. Which lines are most becoming to you? What are they doing for you? What similar lines could do the same thing?

Another place to begin is with yourself. Analyze the size and shape of your face and figure. A guide for analyzing yourself is given on page 4. Ask a group of

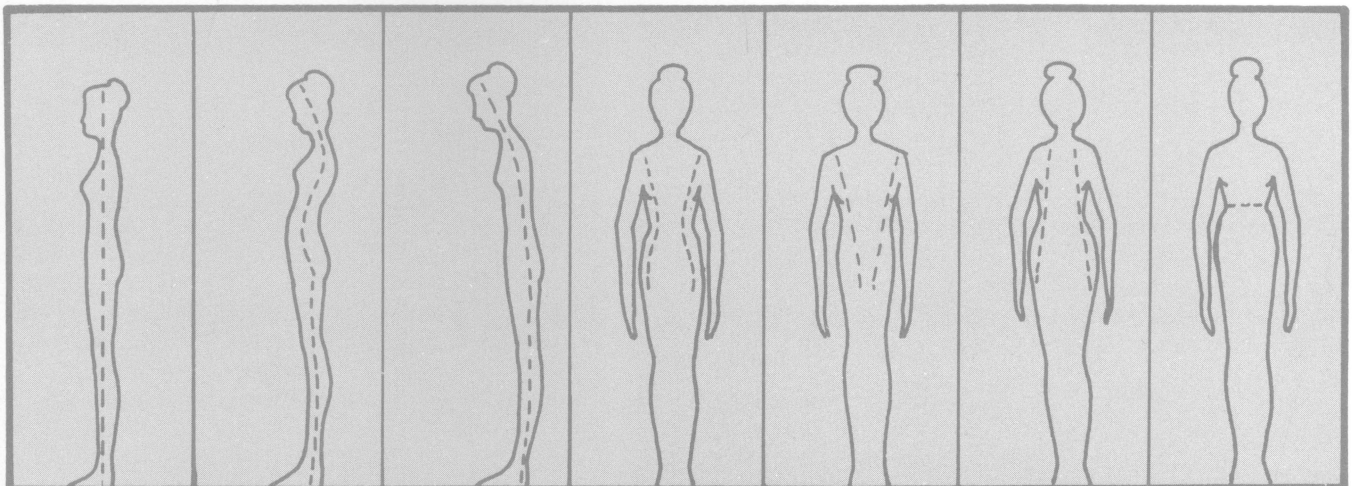


Figure 1

four women to do this for you—one to help indicate the length and width of the parts of your body and the other three to compare the lengths and widths. Or do

it yourself by looking in a full-length mirror or by looking at your silhouette as outlined on a screen by a projector.

Know Your Figure

Proportions for a Pleasing Figure	Your Comparison	Check Your Traits
Figure 7½ to 8 heads high		Broad hips
Shoulders indicate upper sixth of body		Large waistline
Elbows and waist at or slightly above upper third of body		Large bust
Hip and wrist divide figure in half		Flat chest
Underarm or bust divides the upper half in equal parts		High bust
Knees divide the lower half equally		Low bust
Shoulder and hip widths about the same		Wide shoulders
Waist ½ to ⅔ shoulder and hip width		Narrow shoulders
Bust width slightly less than shoulder		Stooped shoulders
Hip and thigh widths about the same		Sloping shoulders
Upper arm width same as elbow		Square shoulders
Shoulders 3 times as wide as the head		Large thighs
Head width ⅔ head length		Large upper arm
Face ⅔ head length		Sway back
Hands as long as the face		Protruding abdomen
Feet as long as the head		Long legs and short waisted
Neck ⅓ length of head		Short legs and long waisted
Chin to base of nose ⅓ of face		Short neck .
Base of nose to eyebrows ⅓ of face		Long neck
Eyebrows to hairline ⅓ of face		Round face
		Long face

How Do You Want to Look?

Now that you have completed analyzing yourself and know what physical traits you have, decide how you want to look. Are you satisfied with your present appearance? Is there anything you could do to improve your figure?

Are you wearing a girdle to firm your hips? If your bustline is not about half way between your shoulders and waistline, can you adjust your brassiere straps to come nearer to this ideal? Do you stand and move gracefully? Is your abdomen flat or does it protrude? Are your hips tucked under? If you are thin, could you add weight? If you are stout, could you lose some pounds? Could you improve your figure and facial characteristics by changing your hair style?

Even though you may have decided that you want to look your best and have made the necessary improvements in your carriage, posture, and grooming, you still may have a figure irregularity, such as a round face, a long neck, a short waist, or wide hips. Be honest with yourself and admit it. Even further, accept it and live with it gracefully. Study how you can handle it.

You have at least two choices when treating a figure problem—making it more obvious or making it less obvious. Decide what effect you want to achieve. After all, just because you are short does not mean that you must make yourself appear taller. Neither may you want to make yourself seem shorter if you are tall. You decide. Most people probably would strive to have their face appear oval. On the other hand, a person with a heart-shaped face might emphasize her wide forehead and pointed chin giving a very pleasing effect. Thus, you may want to emphasize rather than minimize a feature. This is your privilege. Besides it may be an excellent way to make you seem different and distinct—to bring out your individuality.

You may have some features which seem to be in conflict. If it is more important to you to try to improve one rather than the other, then do it, even though people may criticize you. After all, they probably cannot tell that you have made the best decision as you have succeeded in camouflaging the least desirable feature. Your clothes should make you feel at ease. They should give you self-confidence. You should be satisfied that you have done the very best you can with what you are.

Making the Best of What You Are

Choosing becoming lines is one way to make others think your figure and face are more nearly ideal than they are. Making the "right" selections can be a real challenge. It is one that each of us has to meet whether trying to improve our poor proportions or maintain our good figure. Studying the general effect of lines, thinking through each figure problem with its many relationships, and visually checking the results is an excellent way to make the best of what you are.

Let's review some of the effects of lines. This may

be in regard to their placement and their direction. What way do the lines guide your eyes? Do your eyes tend to follow across or do they go up and down? Do lines give a downward or an upward effect?

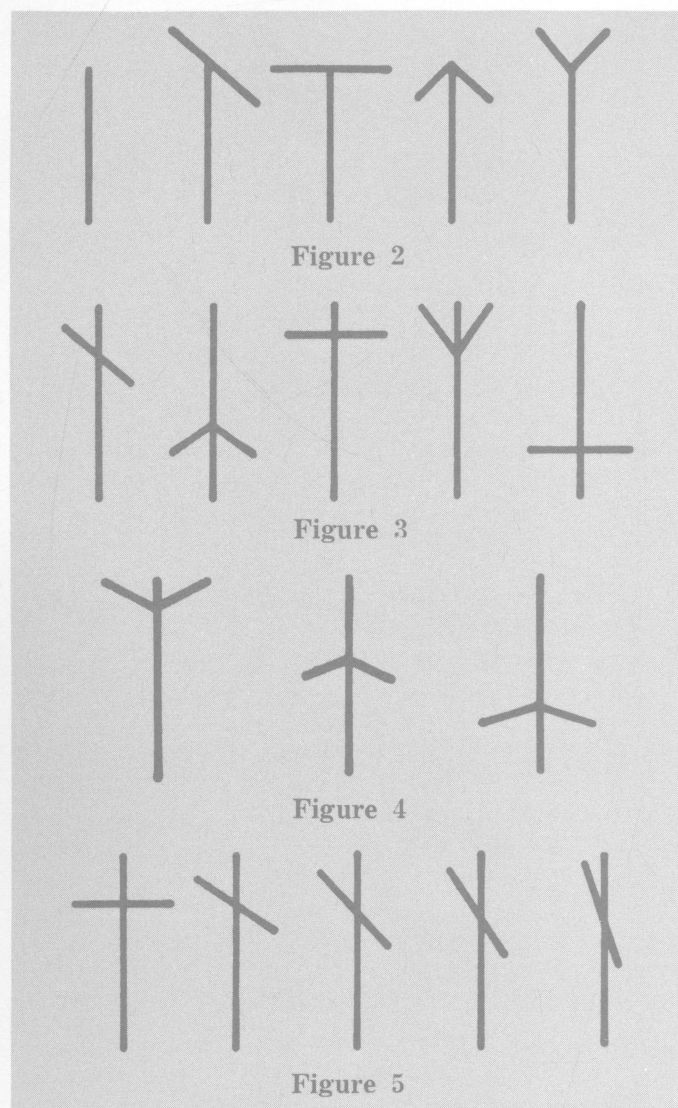
Effects of Lines

Note the optical illusions caused by the lines at the top of four of the vertical lines (Figure 2). Even though the vertical lines are the same length, they don't appear to be. Imagine the effect such lines could have on a figure.

Similar lines used within the figure could produce still other effects (Figure 3).

The placement of a similar type of line is a factor in the overall appearance of the figure. The first one might broaden shoulders, the second one widen hips and narrow waistlines, and the last one narrow shoulders (Figure 4).

The direction of the line is also a factor. The more nearly vertical, the more slimming the line is apt to be. Compare the lines in Figure 5 for the effect of direction of lines.



The neckline of a dress can affect the apparent size and shape of the face (**Figure 6**).

All the circles in **Figure 7** are the same size, but do they seem so? Let's look at the effect of line as though on a long face.

The same type of lines may do one thing to one figure and something else to another figure of different size and proportions. The color and spacing of lines are factors. Study the illustrations in **Figure 8**.

The figures in each of the two groupings (**Figures 9 and 10**) are the same size and shape.

Are you surprised to see that the horizontal lines make the slim figure appear taller and thinner than either the solid-colored or vertically striped fabric? The longer and narrower the silhouette, the higher the ladder for the viewer's eyes to climb. Do you agree that the vertical lines make the stouter figure seem shorter and heavier? The shorter and wider the silhouette, the more vertical lines there are for the eye to jump from one to the next across the figure. Lines do play tricks! The width of stripes, the distance they are apart, the space between the stripes, and their color affect what you see.

Stripes in a fabric form obvious lines. These surface lines can be arranged to broaden shoulders, narrow the waist, or broaden hips (**Figure 11**).

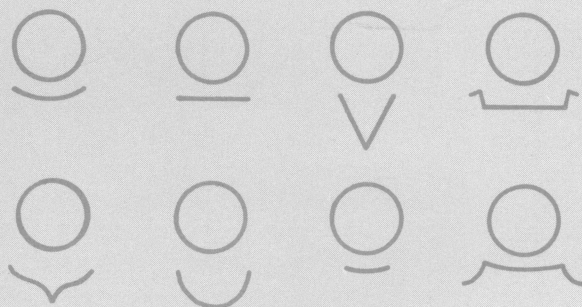


Figure 6

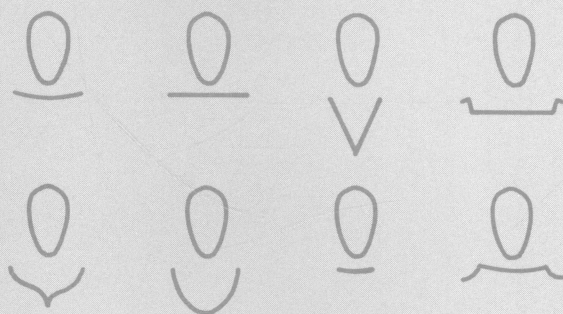


Figure 7

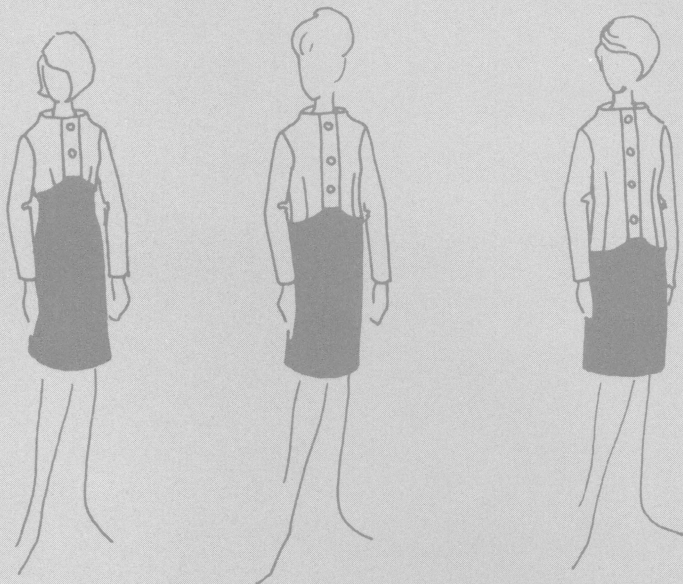


Figure 8

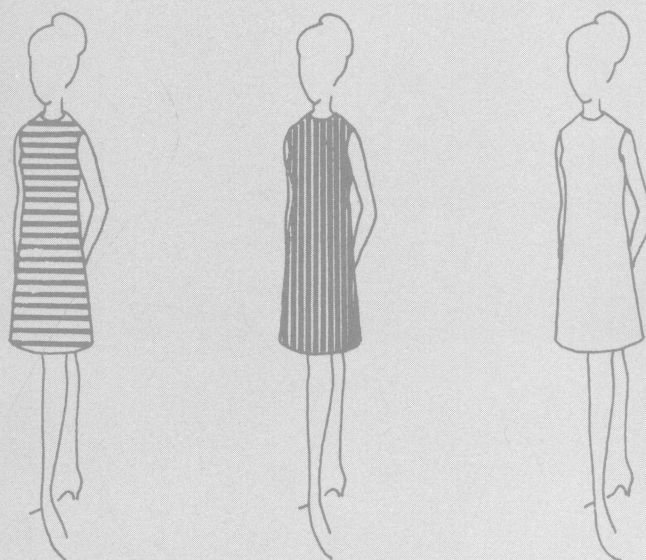


Figure 9

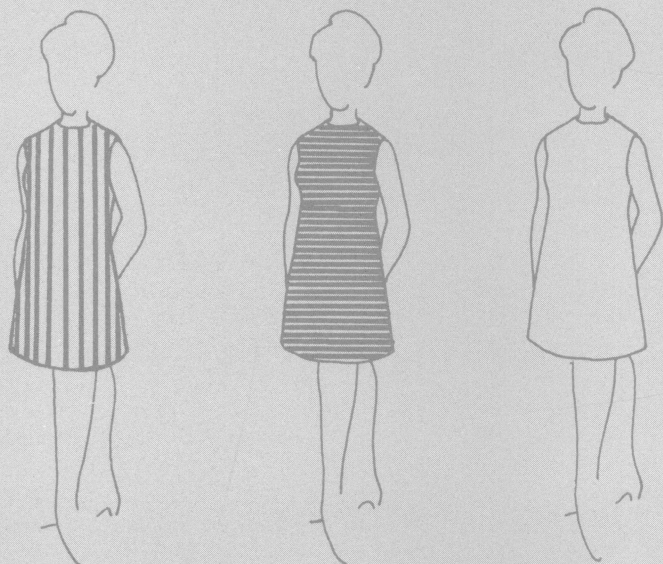


Figure 10

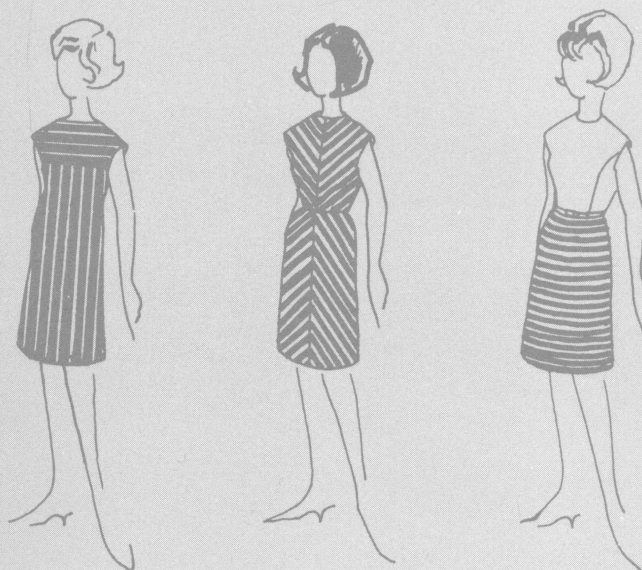


Figure 11

Structural lines such as those made by the edges of collars, pockets, yokes, pleats, and panels may be used in a similar manner (**Figure 12**).

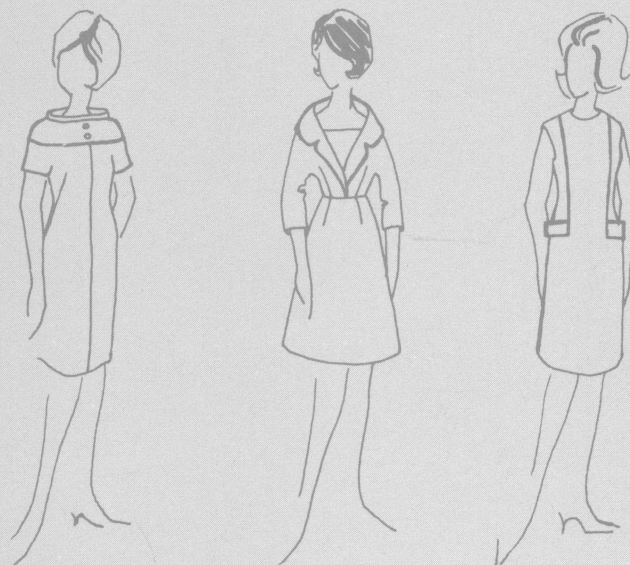


Figure 12

The shape outline of a garment (silhouette line) may also affect the shape of a figure (**Figure 13**).

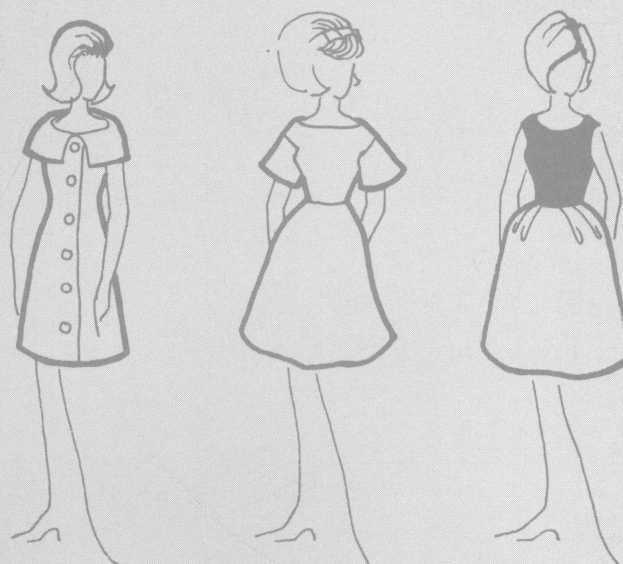


Figure 13

Lines and their effects are not always this obvious. It is a problem to manipulate lines so that figure faults can be minimized. Changing the position of a line only slightly may make considerable change in the apparent shape and size of a figure or part of a figure:

1. Length of jacket (**Figure 14**)

2. Darts (**Figure 15**)

3. Length of sleeve (**Figure 16**)

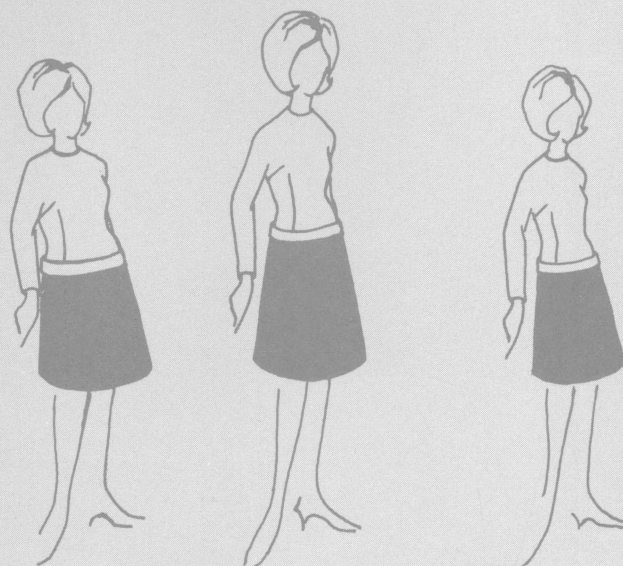


Figure 14

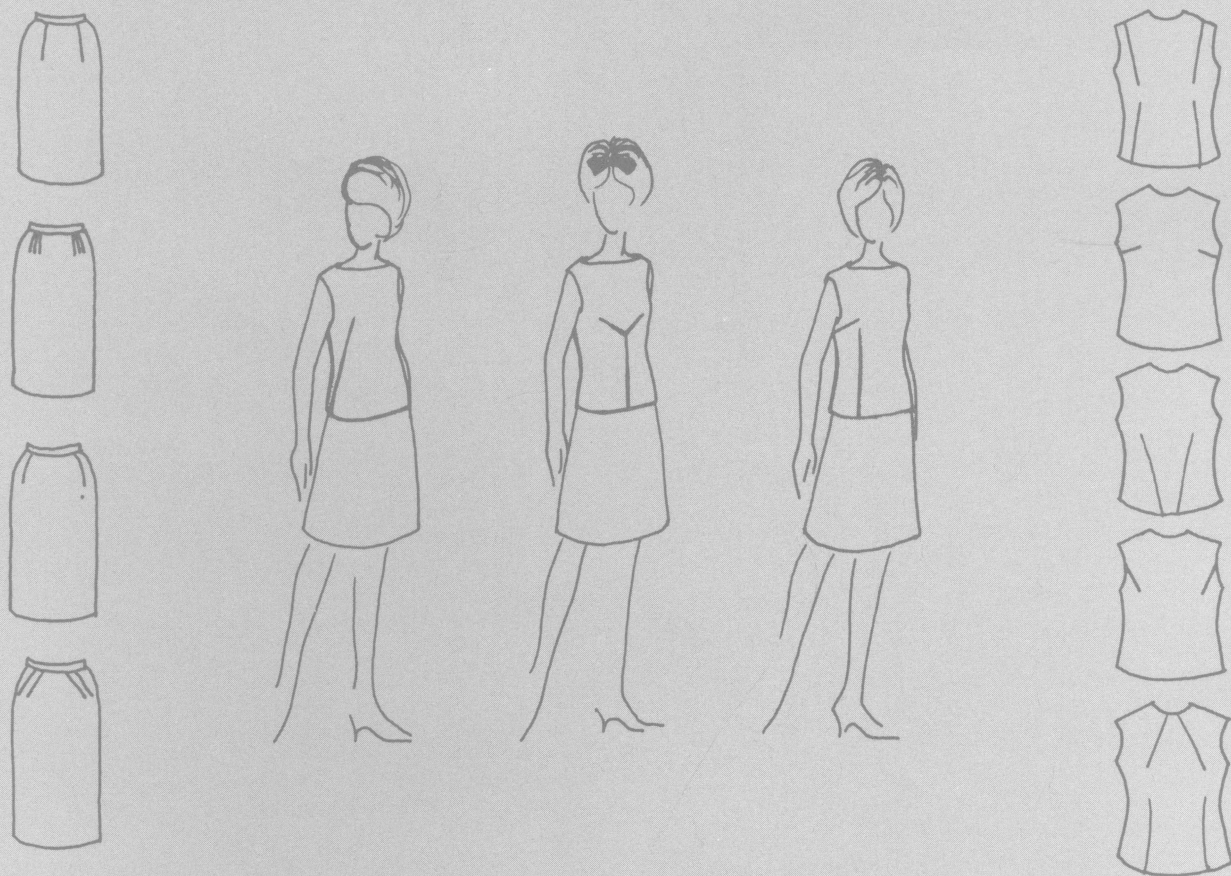


Figure 15

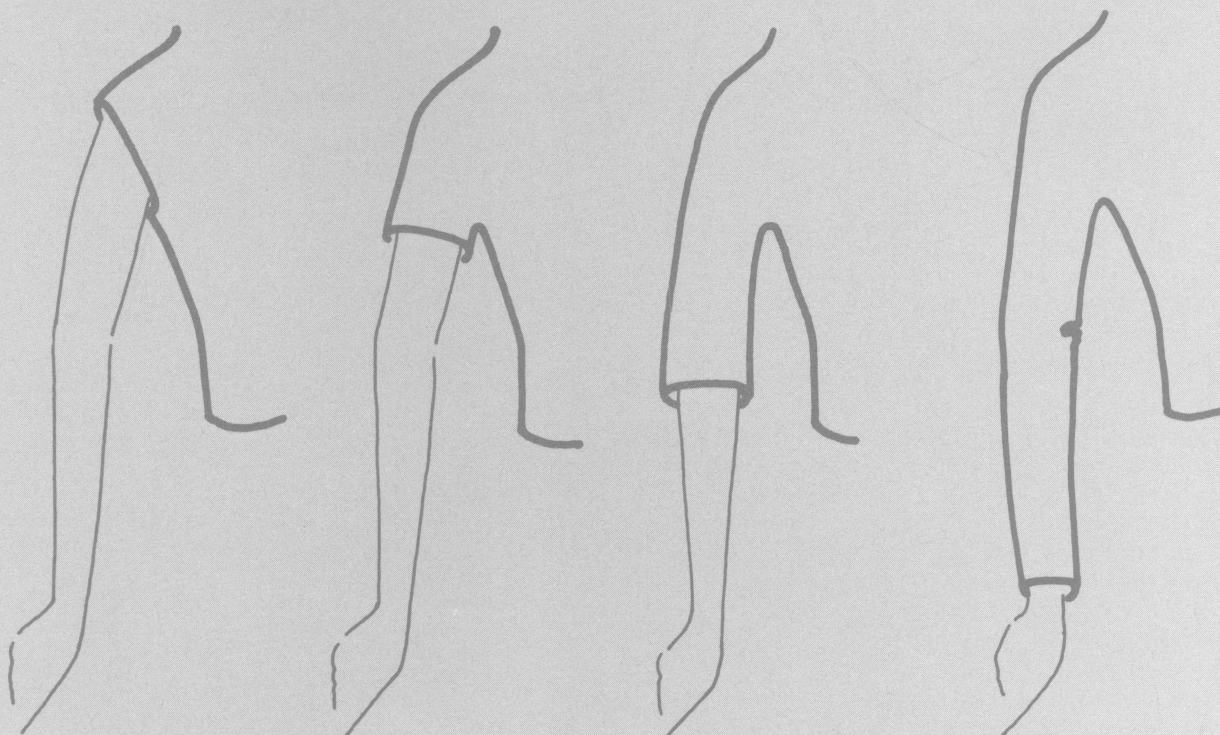


Figure 16

Lines, then, may be used to flatter your figure. They can help your figure to have pleasing proportions. They can do this in one or more different ways. Here are some suggestions:

1. The undersize part may be made to appear larger.

Examples:

- Shoulder pads may be used to increase shoulder width.
- A full skirt and/or pockets at the hip may make narrow hips seem wider.
- Sleeve cuffs may make the bust, hips, or waist seem wider, depending on where they are placed—at the upper arm, elbow, or wrist (**Figure 17**).

2. The viewer's attention may be drawn away from the out-of-proportion part of the figure.

Examples:

- Collar, bow, or flower in a contrasting color may draw attention to the face and away from large hips.
- An overblouse conceals a too-short waist by putting emphasis below the waistline (**Figure 18**).

3. The oversize portion may be concealed.

Examples:

- A gathered bodice or blouson top may minimize a too-large bust.
- A full skirt may hide hips that are too large for the rest of the figure (**Figure 19**).

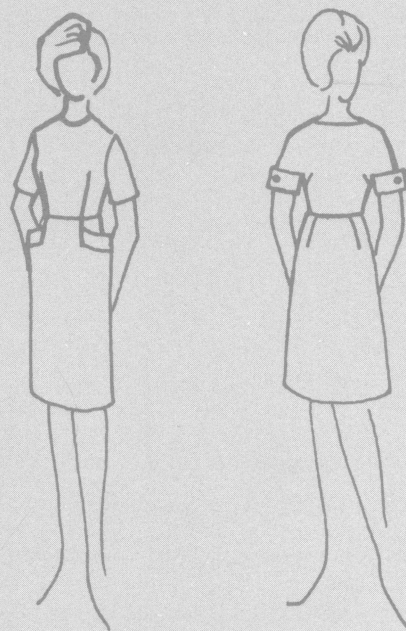


Figure 17

Relating Figure Problems to the Total Effect

Treating one figure problem, or selecting lines for that problem, cannot guarantee that you will improve your total appearance. In fact, you may make your figure or face seem even further from the accepted ideal. Either you may call extra attention to the fault or you may make some other features seem worse by comparison.

Then, to choose flattering clothes, you not only have to analyze the size and shape of each part of your body, but in addition you need to consider the relationship of each part to the other and to the whole. If you are short and heavy, wearing slim skirts may make you seem taller and thinner. However, if your legs are quite heavy, the slim skirt will probably make your legs appear fuller than will a full skirt (**Figure 20**).

You still have to decide how you want to look—taller and thinner or to have better proportioned legs. Perhaps you will choose to compromise and wear a moderately full skirt.

If you are tall but quite short waisted, would you rather have your waist appear longer, or would you rather seem shortened? Wearing a wide belt to “cut your height” probably will make your legs look still longer and your waist even shorter (**Figure 21**).

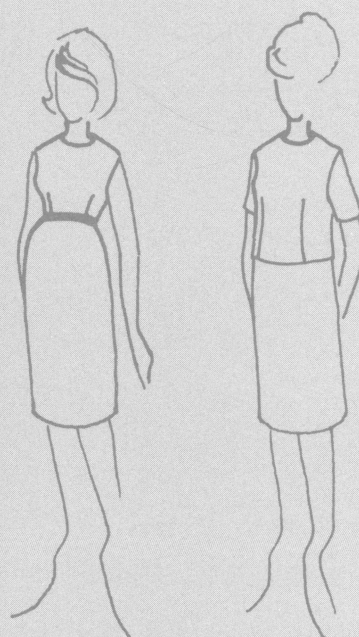


Figure 18

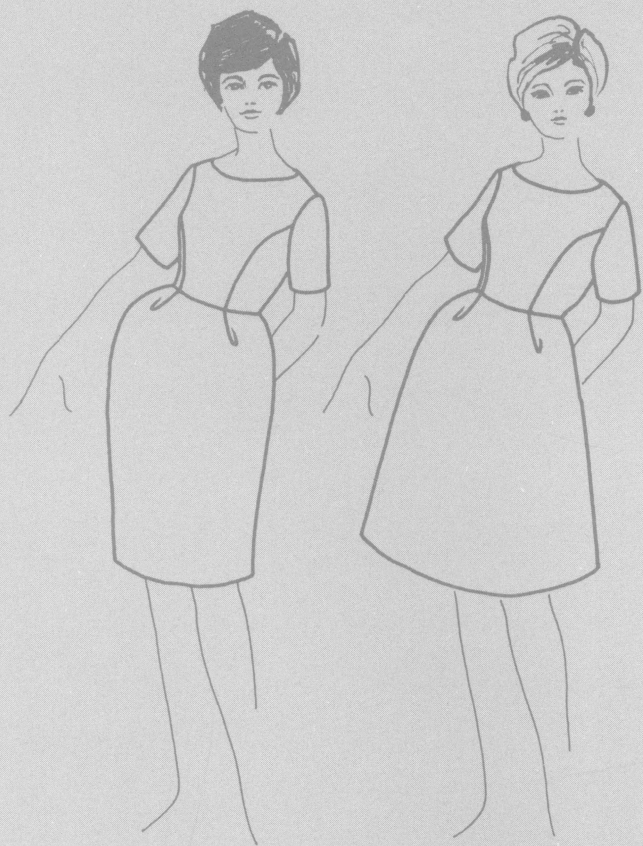


Figure 19

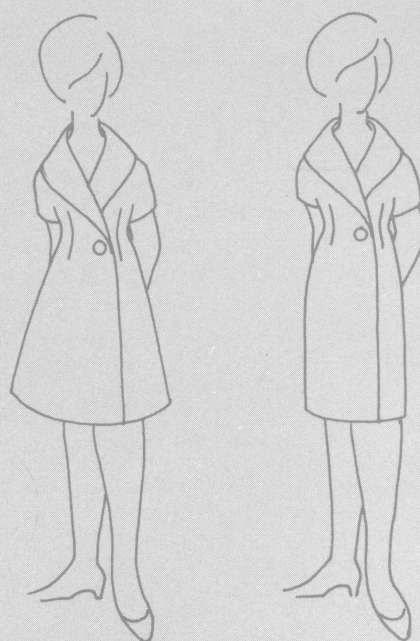


Figure 20

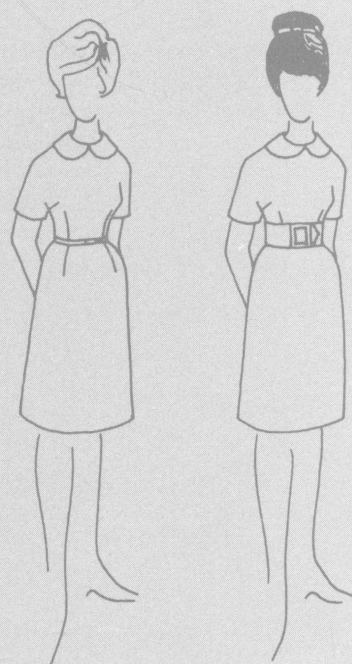


Figure 21

A wide belt or cummerbund usually makes a short-waisted person seem more so. However, the opposite is not necessarily so. Some long-waisted women find wide belts to be quite becoming. On others the belt seems to say, "Look how much more waist there is above me," and it just exaggerates the figure fault.

If you are short but long waisted, wearing a narrow V-neckline to give height will probably make your long waist seem even longer and, by contrast, your legs shorter. If you are short-waisted along with being short, wearing your skirts as long as possible within fashion limits may give you the height desired. However, your total appearance may not be as pleasing because your waist will look still shorter and your legs even longer.

Crosswise lines in the bodice may make a long waist seem shorter. An Empire line is a crosswise line which should help, but suppose you have a low bustline? The total design of the garment could be ruined as an Empire line to be effective needs the figure's bustline above the garment's Empire line. Thus a different style of garment should be selected.

If you have a small waist, you may wish to emphasize it. However, be sure that you are not at the same time, and by contrast, emphasizing a large bust or large hips. Closely fitted princess styles or full length dresses darted closely to the figure at the waistline could easily do this. So could a tight, decorative belt (Figure 22).

Suppose you have narrow shoulders and a long, thin neck. Wearing a very large, cape-like collar may make your shoulders appear wider, but call attention to your neck. High, round necklines are apt to be becoming, but softened ones are less severe (Figure 23).

Another relationship might be a long neck with a round face. Low V-necklines may make a round face seem more oval, but in this relationship the neck will be lengthened. It might be so much that the neck seems as long as the face (Figure 24).

A V-neckline can add length to a round face. However, that same line may be so severe that as you view the two contrasting lines, the face seems more round by comparison. A scarf in the V-line or using curved lines to make the V-line may be much more effective for improving the appearance of the round face (Figure 25).

Some lines may not be becoming to women who have extreme figure faults, even though the faults are in direct opposition. For example, a wide belt or cummerbund may make a small waistline seem more tiny and a large waistline appear still thicker. Sleeveless garments also are difficult for figures at either extreme to wear (Figure 26). They tend to make a tall slim woman seem even more skinny. Her bare arms outline her body thus calling attention to its slimness. The bareness makes the fullness of the figure of the short, stout woman quite obvious.

On the other hand, some lines may be becoming to both extremes. For instance, a bloused bodice may give bulk to a skinny figure, yet conceal the bulk of a heavy figure.



Figure 22

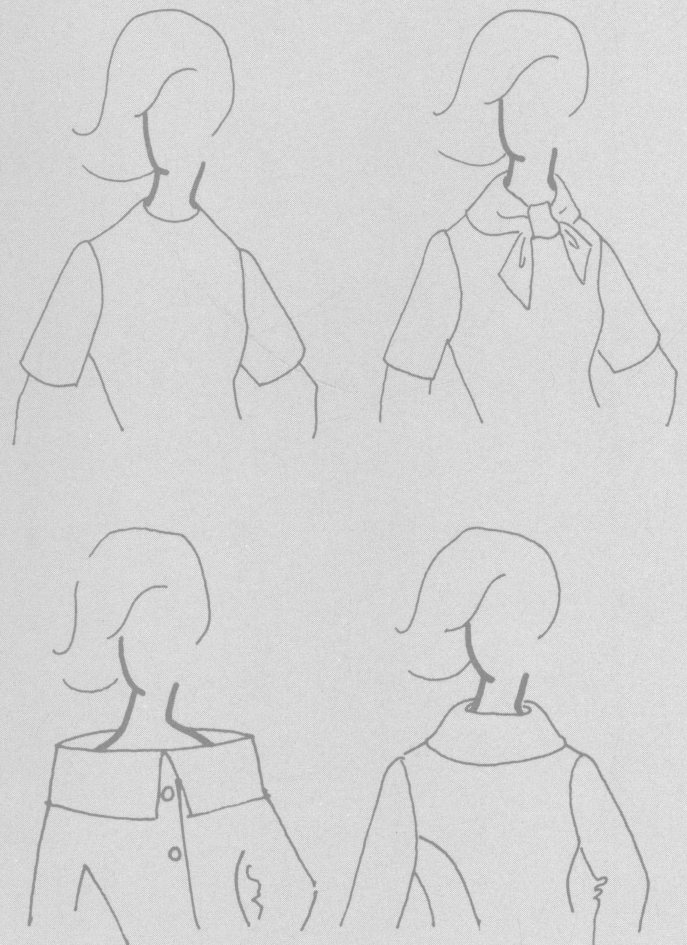


Figure 23

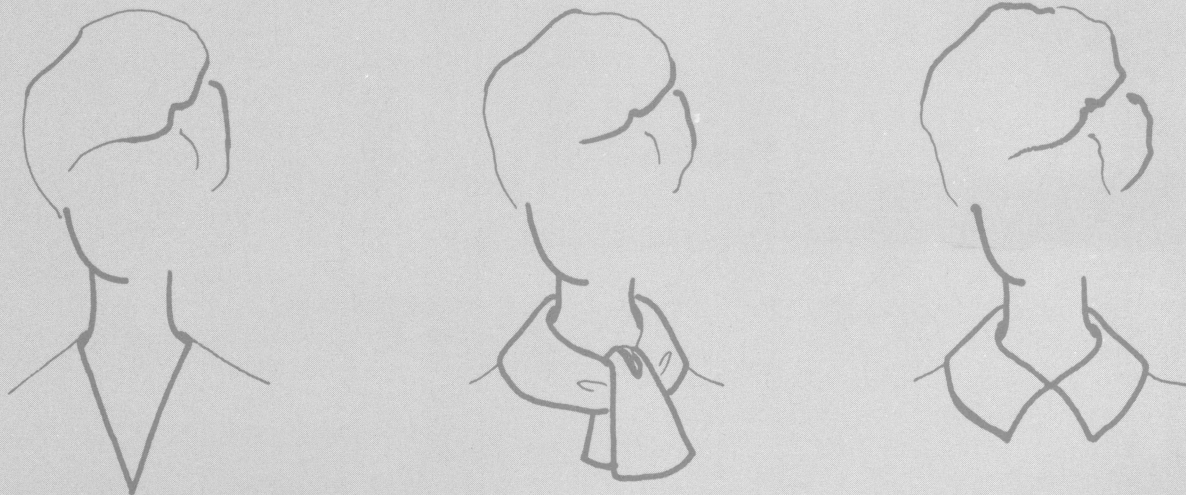


Figure 24

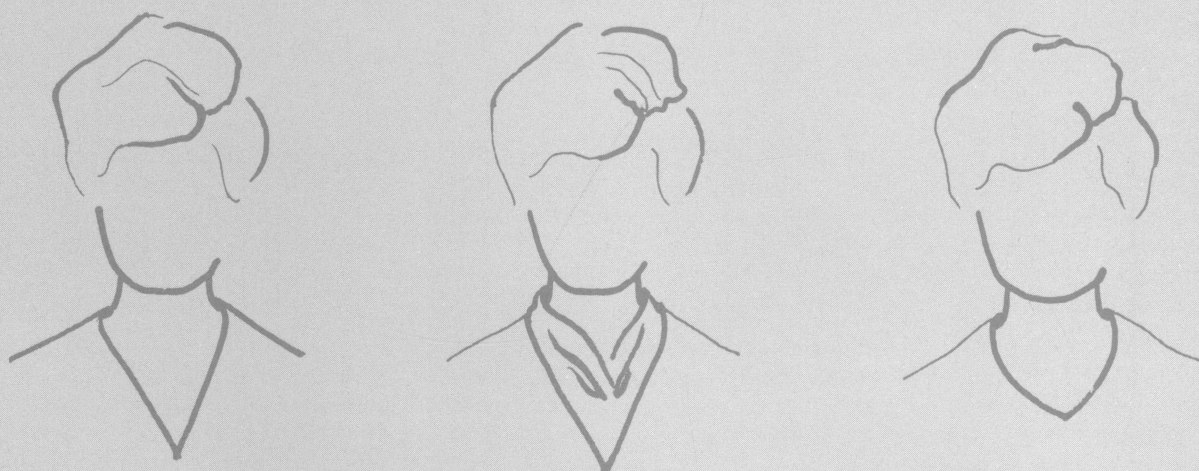


Figure 25

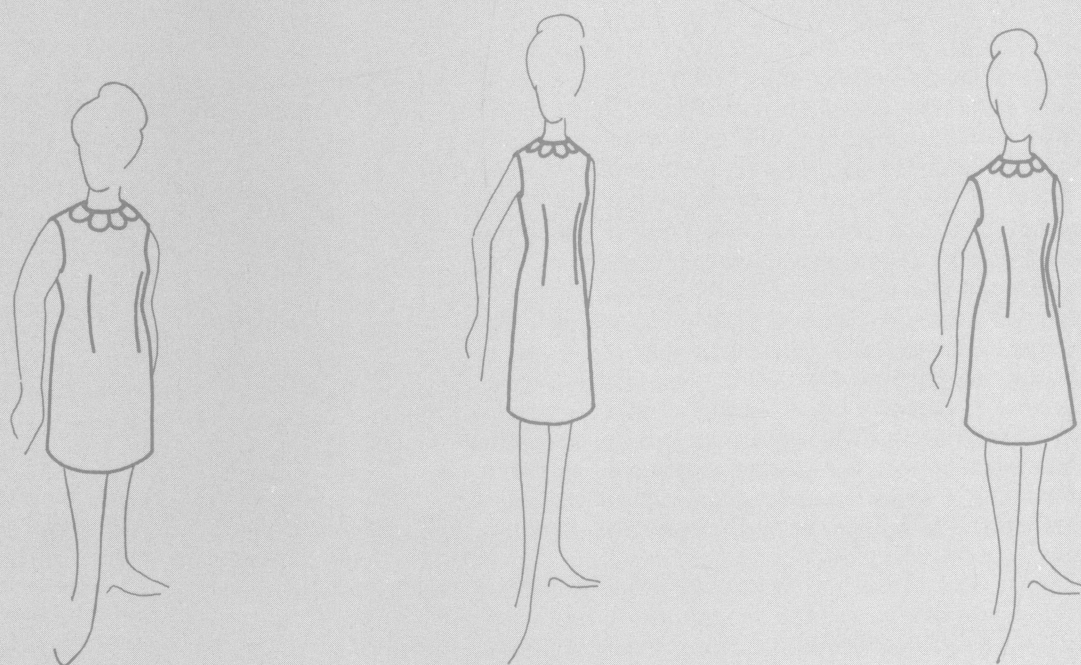


Figure 26

Visually Checking the Results

Actually studying the effect a garment, including each detail, has on you is probably the best solution to improving your appearance:

- Is the shoulder yoke too deep for your short waist?
- Is the peplum too deep for your short skirt?
- Are the cuffs too wide for your skinny arms?
- Are the patch pockets too large for small you?
- Do the small flaps seem lost on big you?
- Is the collar so wide that it overpowers you or your face?
- Does the button front closing actually make you seem taller or shorter?
- Does the skirt length help you have pleasing proportions?
- Does the full skirt hide your large hips or just make you seem larger?
- Is the garment becoming to you?

A garment of a good design would probably have more than one kind of line. Too much repetition is monotonous. Too much variety is confusing. Much of one type and a lesser amount of one or more others is usually interesting.

Besides, to be effective on you, a garment may need more than one kind of line. You may need vertical lines above the waist to lengthen your waist and horizontal lines below your waist to shorten your legs.

Let's study one clothing detail, the lines it can make, and its possible effects. A cord belt has both horizontal (around the waist line) and vertical (dangling ends) lines. The length of the belt and the size of your waistline will help determine which line—vertical or horizontal—will be more obvious on you.

A cord belt can be an inconspicuous belt, particularly if made of the same fabric as that of the dress. If you are a short person, you may find such a belt quite becoming as the horizontal line is so narrow that it does little to break the long, slim lines of your silhouette.

If you are a tall person, you may find it becoming too, particularly if you have a short waist and long legs as much of the waist would remain above the belt. You may decide that the belt in a contrasting color makes the horizontal line more obvious than one in a matching color, thus shortening your figure. However, you may prefer the matching belt if you have a thick waistline. Besides, you may prefer that the center of interest in your costume be near your face, so you would not want the belt to compete with a contrasting colored trimming at your neck.

The position of the tie on a long cord belt may be a problem. If you are short and heavy, the nearer the center the tie is, the taller and thinner you are apt to seem. However, you may have a prominent abdomen

and certainly do not need to make yourself look any thicker from front to back. Adding any kind of knot and dangling ends in front of your abdomen would be too much. Putting the tie at the side would probably just make you seem wider from side to side as the tie would extend beyond the silhouette. After trying a number of places between center front and the side and looking at yourself in a mirror, you probably can find the place that seems to do the most for your abdomen and for your total figure. You may also discover that having the ends at two different lengths is more becoming to you than having them at the same length.

If you are tall you may find that a bulky bow knot with short ends is desirable. If you are skinny, putting the tie at the side may be very becoming. Really stop and look, though. Does having the belt added on to your silhouette really make you look wider, or does it just make everyone aware of how thin you really are? You should try different places, too, and see which really does the most for you.

If you are large, does a single cord belt make you look terribly large in contrast? Would two cords combined into a belt and extra large knots or a series of knots on the belt ends seem more in scale to the large area of you? Large details tend to make a small person seem smaller and small lines tend to make a large person seem larger.

You should study every detail or line in your clothing and its relationship to you. If you think you may be prejudiced, ask another person to look at you as you try on garments and help you decide which effects seem most becoming to you. You are likely to find that several kinds of lines—surface, structural, and silhouette—are equally becoming. Any one of the several styles would help your face and figure appear to have proportions generally acceptable.

Look at Lines on You

Look at Lines on You

Many factors then are involved in choosing flattering lines. Learning rules and following suggested guides for particular problems are helpful up to a point. If everyone had the same identical set of problems, then rules could be made that would give positive solutions. Since this is not so and people do have many deviations, we can expect that there would be exceptions to the rules. Remember, on your figure and under certain conditions, a suggested guide may give the opposite effect from the generally expected.

In an effort to give you a place to begin in selecting becoming clothes, a list of lines you might try if you have a particular problem are given. The list is not complete. Neither may the suggestions work for you. Try the lines on you. Study their effect. Then, choose the ones that give you the best appearance and the most satisfaction.

Lines You Might Like to Try If . . .

You want to look shorter or heavier

- Details extending beyond the silhouette
- Bulky, bunched silhouette lines
- Curved rather than straight lines
- Crosswise structural lines
- Horizontally striped fabrics
- Short, broken vertical lines
- Short diagonal lines
- Combinations of vertical and horizontal lines as in a plaid fabric
- Full, horizontal drapery across the bustline or hipline
- Soft fullness
- Bloused waistlines
- Flaring or contrasting cuffs and collars
- Wide, bulky collars
- Capes
- Peplums and tunics
- Flounces
- Yokes and insets
- Patch pockets
- Off-the-shoulder effects
- Wide belts and cummerbunds
- Dolman sleeves
- Long, full sleeves
- Wide, flowing sleeves
- Three-quarter sleeves
- Gathered, pleated and flared skirts
- Short skirts
- Short coats
- Long jackets
- Long torso styles
- Double-breasted styles
- Separates, two-piece effects, overblouses

You want to look taller or thinner

- Details within the silhouette
- Straight, rather than curved lines
- Long, vertical lines, especially near center of figure
- Vertically striped fabrics
- Simple, uncluttered lines
- Long diagonal lines
- Decoration in lengthwise line on center front
- Slim, smooth silhouette lines
- Narrow panels or gores
- Narrow standing collars
- High necklines
- Long, narrow pointed collars
- Long, narrow V- or U-necklines
- Narrow vest openings
- Narrow belts, preferably to match garment
- Long, straight sleeves
- Raglan sleeves
- Sleeveless garments
- Decoration placed high on the shoulder and near the neck
- Slim skirts
- Skirts as long as possible to be fashionable
- Boleros or short jackets
- Full length coats
- Coat or button-down-the-front styles
- Princess lines and beltless one-piece dresses

You want to make your short waist look longer

- V-necklines
- Center front closing with collarless neckline
- Narrow, center panel in bodice
- Narrow or no belts
- Long torso lines
- Overblouses
- Short skirts (within fashion limits)

You want to make your long waist seem shorter

- Shoulder yokes
- Boleros and short jackets
- Raised waistlines
- Wide midriffs
- Wide belts and cummerbunds
- Vertical lines in skirt
- Skirt as long as possible to be fashionable

You want to conceal a flat chest

- Soft front fullness (gathers, pleats, frills)
- Large collars
- Bows at the neck
- Round, soft details, such as in collars
- Cowl necklines
- Boleros
- Capes
- Pockets and pocket flaps at bustline
- Full sleeves
- Cuffs on sleeves adjacent to the bustline

You want to conceal a large bust

- Soft front fullness, either above or below the bustline
- Jabot or soft full tie at the neckline
- Softly draped bodices
- Lines to broaden shoulders
- Boxy jackets
- Full skirts
- Soft flare in skirts
- Details in skirt

You want to make narrow hips seem wider

- Wide center panel in skirt
- Side pleats in skirt
- Hip yokes
- Gathered skirts
- Pleated skirts, especially with wide pleats
- Peg top skirts
- Skirts with side drape, especially at hips
- Circular skirts
- Wide or contrasting sleeve cuffs at hipline
- Large patch pockets, especially toward side of skirt

You want to make wide hips or large thighs seem more narrow

- Soft fullness or gores in skirt
- Narrow center panels (attracts eye away from silhouette)
- Shallow skirt yokes
- Loose, short jackets
- Bodice emphasis at the shoulders
- Widening effect at the waistline

Lines You Might Like to Try If . . . (continued)

You want to hide a sway-back

- Straight-line jackets
- Capes
- Short jackets ending below the waistline
- Peplums
- Gathered skirts
- Crushed belts or cummerbunds
- Belts buckled at the back
- Lengthened, loose bodices
- Bloused bodices

You want to hide a prominent abdomen

- Details away from the center front
- Details above waistline
- Styles without belts
- Overblouses
- Bodices with easy gathers at the waistline
- Cord belts that tie to the side of the tummy
- Dresses with a side-wrap
- Narrow, self-fabric belts

You want to conceal round shoulders

- Slightly bloused backs
- Blouse gathered at waistline
- Small collars
- Semi-fitted jackets
- Bolero jackets
- Set-in sleeves

You want to make your broad shoulders seem more narrow

- Oval or V-necklines
- Narrow collars and lapels
- Raglan sleeves
- Cut-in-one sleeves
- Flared peplums
- Horizontal lines in the skirt
- Full skirts

You want to make your narrow shoulders seem wider

- Horizontal lines at chest
- Shoulder yokes
- Wide, cape-like collars
- High pockets
- Wide lapels
- Diagonal lines to tip of shoulders
- Bateau necklines

You want to make a short, plump neck appear longer

- Cardigan styles
- Narrow, deep-V-necklines
- Low necklines
- Narrow, flat, and pointed collars

You want to make a long, skinny neck appear shorter

- Curved, high necklines
- Standup collars
- Square necklines
- Soft, full or deep collars
- Scarves and ascots
- Ruffled jabots

You have a square face

- V-necklines
- Sweetheart necklines
- Deep, oval necklines
- Soft, rounded collars

You have a triangular face

- High, square or round necklines
- High draped necklines

You have a long face

- High, round necklines
- High, rolled collars
- Softly rounded collars
- Bows, scarves and ascots

You have a round face

- Narrow, deep V-necklines
- Low necklines
- Narrow lapels
- Long, narrow collars
- Small, pointed collars